U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2005-146-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: amend COC22923C

PROJECT NAME: connecting line in Foundation Creek

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian,
T.4S., R.102W.,
sec. 25, NE¼NW¼

APPLICANT: Canyon Gas Resources

ISSUES AND CONCERNS (optional):

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: Canyon Gas Resources (hereafter Canyon) existing lines were built in the 1970's with NEPA done to the existing standards. EnCana has pipelines along Hwy 139 and the road to the Foundation Creek Plant which were permitted in 1996-97. The pipeline will cross Foundation Creek. At the request of BLM, Canyon has altered their proposed action to bore the line under Foundation Creek to avoid the riparian area.

Proposed Action: Canyon proposes to construct 600 feet of new 6" line to tie an existing 6" line into Trunk B on the Foundation Creek Gathering System. The tie-in will serve as a delivery point, allowing Canyon to separate Trunks A and B, to better serve producers on the system. High inert wells could flow on Trunk B and go thru the CO_2 plant and the low inert wells would flow on Trunk A.

The buried pipeline under Foundation Creek will be bored rather than open trenched. The boring machine will start 60 feet away from the channels edge on each side to allow for the diagonal entry. A work area of 60' x 100' on each end would be needed to stack pipe and accommodate the equipment. The right of way (ROW) and temporary work area would be 0.960 acres and the permanent ROW would be 0.689 acres.

The project includes the installation of a new above ground tap, associated piping, and valve set.

Canyon proposes to start construction by June 15, 2005 or as soon as all appropriate ROW grants and other written authorizations have been received from the BLM. Temporary access will be needed to complete the project. The width is 50 feet and new area of disturbance will be .689 acres. It is expected to need a workforce of 5 to 10 people.

Prior to construction, all of Canyon's and other existing lines will be located and staked, as will any avoidance areas and construction control points. All construction will take place within the ROW width. Vegetation and other materials that are cleared from the ROW will be placed within the ROW area for later use in reclamation and to impede unauthorized vehicle traffic or will be removed in accordance with landowner directives.

After construction, the work areas will be restored, as near as practicable, to the original contour of the land. It will be Canyon's responsibility to ensure that erosion control, weed management, and revegetation efforts continue to meet the objectives of stabilization and productivity along the ROW. Canyon will develop an approved seed mix and application schedule to be approved by the BLM. Pipeline markers will be place if determined necessary.

The project includes the retirement of small amounts of piping and valves. All retired materials will be removed from the site. Waste materials will be collected daily and disposed of at an approved landfill/waste disposal site. Contractors will provide trash barrels or dumpsters to collect construction trash, and solid wastes will be routinely removed and disposed of at an approved facility. No hazardous/toxic substances are proposed for use in connection with the construction project.

No Action Alternative: The pipeline right-of-way would not be granted and construction would not take place.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: None

NEED FOR THE ACTION: The pipeline construction project will allow separation of Trunks A and B of the Foundation Creek gathering system to provide better service to Canyon's producers/customers. This action is to respond to the request by the applicant to develop and improve their natural gas gathering system.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Pages 2-49 thru 2-52

Decision Language: "To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values."

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The proposed actions are not located within a twenty mile radius of any special designation air sheds or non-attainment areas. Overall, construction operations should not greatly compromise National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) on an hourly or daily basis.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Exhaust from construction equipment will increase nitrogen dioxide (NO2), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and carbon monoxide (CO) levels which can deteriorate air quality. Dry periods combined with gusty winds will temporarily increase fugitive dust levels, also reducing local air quality. However, given the short duration for construction of the proposed pipeline, no significant air quality concerns are anticipated.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: The operator will be responsible for complying with all local, state, and federal air quality regulations as well as provide documentation to the BLM that they have done so.

Surfaces disturbed during construction will be promptly revegetated. Adequate ground cover (e.g. woody debris) must be applied to minimize surface exposure to eolian processes.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed pipeline route has been inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Conner 2005, Compliance Dated 7/21/2005) with no cultural resources identified in the inventoried area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed pipeline will not impact any known cultural resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no new impacts to cultural resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: The proposed project is located in a sagebrush bottom composed of Wyoming Big Sagebrush, western wheatgrass, greasewood and a variety of forbs. Adjacent to this site is the Wolf Ridge fire which burned in the mid-1990s. This fire was seeded with a

variety of non-native species. Noxious weeds of concern in this area include; houndstongue, bull thistle, musk thistle, Canada thistle and black henbane. There is also the opportunity for construction equipment and support vehicle to introduce noxious weeds of which the knapweed species are of special concern.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: In following the mitigation requirements for control of noxious weeds there would not be any impacts to the adjacent plant communities. The proposed seed mix contains non-native species which will provide for vegetation cover and soil stability. Additionally, these species are similar to those used to revegetate the Wolf Ridge fire. These species are not expected to move offsite or to interbreed with adjacent native species.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no additional impacts.

Mitigation: The permit holder is required to control noxious weeds within the project area in accordance with label requirements and BLM regulations.

Apply the following Conditions of Approval from the White River ROD/RMP, Appendix B: RECLAMATION

180. All disturbed sites shall be promptly reclaimed to the satisfaction of the Area Manger.

181. Reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized Officer.

182. The goal for rehabilitation of any disturbed area shall be the permanent restoration of original site conditions and productive capability.

183. Disturbed areas shall be restored as nearly as possible to its original contour.

184. Fill material shall be pushed into cut areas and up over backslopes. Leave no depressions that will trap water or form ponds.

185. Distribute topsoil evenly over the location and prepare a seedbed by disking or ripping. Drill seed on contour at a depth no greater than ½ inch. In areas that cannot be drilled, broadcast at double the seeding rate and harrow seed into the soil.

186. Use seed that is certified and free of noxious weeds. Seed certification tags must be submitted to the Field Manager.

187. Additional seed applications may be required to accommodate specific site conditions or if initial seed germination has failed.

188. Seed species used in reseeding disturbed areas will be based on the seed mixes identified in table B1 and B2. Holder may use Seed Mix #1 or #6 for this site.

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Ecological Sites
#1	Siberian wheatgrass (P27) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Hycrest) Alternates: Fourwing saltbush, Nutall's saltbush, Winterfat, Annual Sunflower, Western wheatgrass	3 2 3	Alkaline Uplands, Badlands, Clayey 7"-9", Clayey Salt Desert, Cold Desert Breaks, Cold Desert Overflow, Gravelly 7"-9", Limey Cold Desert, Loamy 7"-9", Loamy Cold Desert, Loamy Salt Desert, Saline Lowland, Salt Desert Breaks, Salt Flats, Salt Meadow Sands 7"-9", Sandy 7"-9', Sandy Cold Desert, Sandy Salt Desert, Shale 7"-9", Shale/Sands Complex, Shallow Loamy, Shallow Sandy, Shallow Slopes, Silty Salt Desert, Silty Swale, Steep Slopes
#6	Basin wildrye (Magnar) Western wheatgrass (Rosanna) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Orchardgrass (Paiute) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana	2 3 3 1 1	Foothill Swale, Sandy Swale, Swale Meadow

189. Leave the disturbed area in a condition that provides drainage with no additional maintenance.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: The proposed pipeline is situated between an existing well pad and an established secondary road in an area dominated by Wyoming big sagebrush and greasewood with an understory comprised of western wheat grass, annual grasses and various forbs. These low density sagebrush communities typically do not support species of high conservation interest (e.g., Brewer's sparrow and sage sparrow). Species such as meadowlark, horned lark and lark sparrow are not uncommon, and are well distributed at appropriate densities throughout the White River Resource Area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: This project would have little, if any affect on the reproductive functions of migratory birds. These areas of lower density shrublands with poorly developed, annual-dominated understories situated within a few hundred feet of active well pads and their access roads typically support little bird nesting activities. In addition, project construction would be initiated in mid to late July 2005, well after the majority of migratory birds have completed their reproductive activities.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on migratory birds under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: There are no threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species that inhabit or derive important use from the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on special status animals or associated habitat.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no conceivable influence on special status animals or associated habitat under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: The proposed action would have no effective influence on populations or habitat associated with special status species.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at sites included in the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated. Solid wastes would be properly disposed of.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: The applicant shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by the proposed actions.

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: Surface Water: The proposed pipeline is located in the Big Foundation Creek catchment area near the confluence with West Douglas Creek. Big Foundation Creek is situated in stream segment 23 of the White River Basin. A review of the Colorado's 1989 Nonpoint Source Assessment Report (plus updates), the 305(b) report, the

303(d) list and the White River Resource Area was done to see if any water quality concerns have been identified. It should be noted that the main stem of Douglas Creek has been listed on the Monitoring and Evaluation List (M&E List) and identified as a "fragile" watershed NOT meeting water quality standards with regards to salinity and suspended sediment. As a tributary to Douglas Creek, activities affecting water quality in West Douglas Creek will have a direct impact on water quality in the main stem. The State has designated stream segment 23 as beneficial for the following uses: Cold Aquatic Life 1, Recreation 1a, water supply, and Agriculture. For this reach, minimum standards for four parameters have been listed. These parameters are: dissolved oxygen = 6.0 mg/l, pH = 6.5 - 9.0, Fecal Coliform = 200/100 ml, and 126/100 ml E. coli.

Ground Water: The proposed pipeline will be constructed near the lowest topographic point within the Big Foundation Creek catchment area. As a topographic low, the area of construction is also located in an area of local groundwater discharge. Groundwater discharge at this location supplies water (or saturates alluvium during drought years) to Big Foundation Creek during base flow periods. This local groundwater will be encountered while boring beneath Big Foundation Creek.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Construction of the pipeline will result in temporary exposure of soils to erosional processes. Heavy equipment used during construction combined with the removal of ground cover will increase erosive potential due to runoff (overland flows) and raindrop impact during storm events. Stream bank stability will be compromised as a result of increased runoff from construction areas.

Local ground water will be vulnerable to contamination if a spill or leak results from the pipeline or construction equipment.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: All surfaces disturbed during construction will be promptly revegetated and adequate ground cover must be applied. The use of biodegradable fabric (e.g. jute) may be necessary to stabilize certain areas highly susceptible to erosion. To minimize adverse impacts on stream banks, temporary use areas (TUA) associated with boring must be situated a safe distance from actively eroding stream terraces (e.g. ~ 40'). In addition, a minimum burial depth of 10-12 feet will be required as the pipeline crosses beneath Big Foundation Creek.

To mitigate contamination of local ground water, environmentally unfriendly substances (e.g. diesel) must not be allowed to contact soils. The use of impermeable matting under equipment is suggested to intercept such contaminants prior to contacting soils.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: Water quality in Big Foundation Creek currently meets water quality standards set forth by the sate. The main stem of Douglas Creek has been identified as a perennial stream NOT meeting water quality standards (suspended sediment and salinity). However, with proper mitigation water quality in Douglas Creek will not be compromised.

WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: The proposed project crosses Big Foundation Creek which contains a well developed riparian area consisting primarily of sedges. Flows are perennial during normal precipitation years and fed by a spring above the project area. The channel for a large part of the area is undefined with broad overland water flow. This riparian area meets the standard for wetlands and riparian zones.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Boring under the creek and riparian area would impact the composition or structure of this riparian area. Following mitigation will prevent damage of the riparian area and the riparian area will continue to meet the standard for wetlands and riparian zones.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts.

Mitigation: The goal of these mitigation requirements is to prevent disturbance of the riparian area. The permit holder is to prevent vehicles or equipment from crossing or construction within the riparian area.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, or Wild and Scenic Rivers, threatened, endangered or sensitive plants exist within the area affected by the proposed action. For threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species Public Land Health Standard is not applicable since neither the proposed nor the no-action alternative would have any influence on populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: The proposed actions will not encounter any fragile soils. The following data is a product of an order III soil survey conducted by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The accompanying table highlights important soil characteristics. A complete summary of this information can be found at the White River Field Office.

Soil Number	Soil Name	Slope	Ecological site	Salinity	Run Off	Erosion Potential	Bedrock
89	Tisworth fine sandy loam	0-5%	Alkaline Slopes	>4	Rapid	Moderate	>60

Soil Number	Soil Name	Slope	Ecological site	Salinity	Run Off	Erosion Potential	Bedrock
90	Torrifluvents, gullied	0-5%	None		Rapid	Very high	>60

89-Tisworth fine sandy loam (0 to 5 percent slopes) is a deep, well drained soil found on valley floors and broad fans. It formed in alluvium derived dominantly from sedimentary rock with a high content of gypsum and alkaline salt. Areas are elongated and are 30 to 300 acres. Permeability of this Tisworth soil is slow. Available water capacity is moderate. Effective rooting depth is 60 inches or more. Runoff is rapid, and the hazard of water erosion is moderate.

The potential plant community on this unit is mainly greasewood, big sagebrush, Nevada bluegrass, western wheatgrass, bottlebrush squirrel tail, and shadscale. Smaller amounts of winterfat and rabbit brush commonly are also present in the potential plant community. The production of forage is limited by low precipitation, rapid runoff, alkalinity, and a short growing season. Salt and alkali-tolerant grasses are best suited to this unit.

90-Torrifluvents are found along narrow valley bottoms, in swales, and on eroded fans. Slope is 0 to 5 percent. Areas are long and narrow or irregular in shape and are 40 to 200 acres in size. The native vegetation is mainly sparse desert shrubs and annual grasses. This unit is 80 percent Torrifluvents that are characterized by gullies and headcuts 3 to 35 feet deep and 5 to 150 feet wide. Torrifluvents are moderately deep and are well drained and somewhat excessively drained. They formed in highly calcareous and gypsiferous, stratified sandy, loamy, and clayey alluvium derived dominantly from sandstone and shale. Permeability of the Torrifluvents is moderately rapid to slow. Available water capacity is moderate to high. Effective rooting depth is 60 inches or more. Runoff is rapid, and the hazard of water erosion is very high, which results in high production of sediment during rainstorms and periods of snowmelt.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Construction of the proposed pipeline will decrease ground cover leaving soils exposed to erosional processes. Accelerated erosion rates will occur along disturbed areas if proper mitigation measures are not followed.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: Comply with "Gold Book" surface operating standards for constructing the pipeline. Revegetate all disturbed surfaces following construction with Standard seed mix #1 as defined in the White River ROD/RMP. Flow deflectors and sediment traps (woody debris) must also be utilized in attempts to mitigate erosive potential of overland flows. The use of biodegradable fabric (e.g. jute) may be necessary to stabilize certain areas highly susceptible to erosion. Any stockpiled soils must be covered (if left for more than one work day) and silt fences will be situated on down gradient sides.

To mitigate contamination of soils and local ground water, environmentally unfriendly substances (e.g. diesel) must not be allowed to contact soils. The use of impermeable matting under equipment is suggested to intercept such contaminants prior to contacting soils.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: At the present time, soils in the vicinity of the proposed action exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, landform, climate, and geologic processes. The proposed actions will cause decreases in both infiltration and permeability rates due to soil compaction and loss of vegetal cover. However, with proper mitigation soil health should not be greatly compromised.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The proposed project is located in a sagebrush bottom composed of Wyoming Big Sagebrush, western wheatgrass, greasewood and a variety of forbs. Adjacent to this site is the Wolf Ridge fire which burned in the mid-1990s. This fire was seeded with a variety of non-native species.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Following reclamation, the site is expected to have adequate vegetation cover to stabilize the soils. Soil stability is expected within three years.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: N o Impacts

Mitigation: Refer to INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES Mitigation.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* The project site will following reclamation meet the Public land health standard for plant communities.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Foundation Creek, an intermittent channel, has the potential to support a simple invertebrate-based aquatic community however; higher order vertebrate forms are not associated with this site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There is no reasonable likelihood that the proposed action would have any influence on aquatic wildlife or habitats. The pipeline will be bored underneath the channel and therefore will not compromise the channel.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on aquatic wildlife or habitat(s) under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): This action would have no influence on Public Land surface resources and would remain neutral in its affect on aquatic wildlife and habitat. Both the

proposed and no-action alternatives would not affect the current status of Land Health Standards as applied to aquatic wildlife.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The project area is broadly encompassed by Wyoming big sagebrush and greasewood. This area normally represents general winter range for deer and severe winter range for elk however; the utility of the project area in providing big game forage or cover is severely compromised by its lack of preferred woody and herbaceous forages and its close proximity to State Highway 139.

Although the project area lies adjacent to immature pinyon-juniper woodlands, there are no suitable nest trees for woodland raptor species located within the stand.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is not expected to result in any adverse effects to terrestrial wildlife. Construction of the proposed pipeline will result in the removal of < 1 acre of vegetation, much of which is ignored by big game as forage (e.g., greasewood). Additionally, earthwork associated with the project area is scheduled to be completed outside the critical timeframe for big game (1 December through 30 April). Subsequent reclamation of the pipeline corridor and staging areas would promote improvements in ground cover composition (especially perennial bunchgrasses) that would lead to incremental benefits for big game, particularly during late fall and early spring.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on terrestrial wildlife under the no action alternative

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): This action would have no influence on Public Land surface resources and would remain neutral in its affect on wildlife habitat or populations. Both the proposed and no-action alternatives would not affect the current status of Land Health Standards as applied to wildlife.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management	X		

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Geology and Minerals		X	
Hydrology/Water Rights		X	
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise	X		
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management		X	
Realty Authorizations			X
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources			X
Wild Horses	X		

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The proposed pipeline route is located in an area generally mapped as part of the Mesa Verde Formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has classified as a Condition I formation meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil formations. However, the majority of the project appears to be located in an area of alluvial deposition where the potential for impacting the formation is relatively low.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: If it should become necessary to trench into the underlying rock formation there is a potential to impact scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing paleontological sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible)

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines

for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

REALTY AUTHORIZATIONS

Affected Environment: The proposed pipeline route connects two existing Canyon Gas buried pipelines: COC25122B (6") and COC22923C (10). Encana Well 7401 is adjacent to the SE end which ties in to COC25122B. Access to the construction area will use Highway 139 and the unnamed Foundation Creek road. Other pipelines and power lines are in the area but will not be crossed by construction.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The pipeline would be authorized by an amendment to COC25155B.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: The pipeline would not be authorized and there would be no additional impacts.

Mitigation: Colorado One Call procedure must be initiated before any trenching or other construction begins.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed action would be located in an area with a VRM II classification. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would be located in close proximity to a casual observer traveling along state highway 139. Since the proposed action would be a short linear disturbance, the time a casual observer would be able to view the proposed action, would be of short duration. After the proposed action has been seeded and vegetation established, the casual observer would be able to view the action, but it should not attract his/her attention. By painting any above ground facilities Juniper Green to blend with and mimic the surrounding vegetation, the proposed action would be even less visible. The level of change to the characteristic landscape would be low and the objectives of the VRM classification would be retained.

Environmental Consequences of Alternative 1: There would be no measurable difference in the method used on the proposed action. The reclamation and visibility of the finished action would be virtually the same.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impact.

Mitigation: Paint all above ground facilities Juniper Green.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: This action is consistent with the scope of impacts addressed in the White River ROD/RMP. The cumulative impacts of oil and gas activities are addressed in the White River ROD/RMP for each resource value that would be affected by the proposed action.

REFERENCES CITED:

Conner, Carl E.
2005 Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for a Proposed Short Pipeline Route in the Existing EnCana Foundation Creek Com A #7401 Well Location in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden
1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: None

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Robert Fowler	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Bo Brown	Petroleum Engineer Tech/Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Robert Fowler	Forester	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Soils
Robert Fowler	Rangeland Management Specialist	Vegetation
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Robert Fowler	Rangeland Management Specialist	Rangeland Management
Linda Jones	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Keith Whitaker	Natural Resource Specialist	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

CO-110-2005-146-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to authorize the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of a natural gas connecting pipeline as described in the proposed action with the addition of the following mitigation measures:

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. The operator will be responsible for complying with all local, state, and federal air quality regulations as well as provide documentation to the BLM that they have done so.

2. Colorado One Call procedure shall be initiated before any trenching or other construction begins.

3. The applicant shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by the proposed actions.

4. To mitigate contamination of soils and local ground water, environmentally unfriendly substances (e.g. diesel) must not be allowed to contact soils. The use of impermeable matting under equipment is suggested to intercept such contaminants prior to contacting soils.

5. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing **historic or archaeological sites,** or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)

- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

6. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

7. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing **paleontological** sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible)

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

8. All disturbed sites shall be promptly reclaimed to the satisfaction of the Area Manager. Reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible.

9. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized Officer. The goal for rehabilitation of any disturbed area shall be the permanent restoration of original site conditions and productive capability. Disturbed areas shall be restored as nearly as possible to its original contour. Fill material shall be pushed into cut areas and up over backslopes. Leave no depressions that will trap water or form ponds.

10. Distribute topsoil evenly over the location and prepare a seedbed by disking or ripping. Drill seed on contour at a depth no greater than ½ inch. In areas that cannot be drilled, broadcast at double the seeding rate and harrow seed into the soil. Use seed that is certified and free of noxious weeds. Seed certification tags must be submitted to the Field Manager. Additional seed applications may be required to accommodate specific site conditions or if initial seed germination has failed.

11. Seed species used in reseeding disturbed areas will be based on the seed mixes identified in table B1 and B2. Holder may use Seed Mix #1 or #6.

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Ecological Sites
#1	Siberian wheatgrass (P27) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Hycrest) Alternates: Fourwing saltbush, Nutall's saltbush,Winterfat,Annual Sunflower, Western wheatgrass	3 2 3	Alkaline Uplands, Badlands, Clayey 7"-9", Clayey Salt Desert, Cold Desert Breaks, Cold Desert Overflow, Gravelly 7"-9", Limey Cold Desert, Loamy 7"-9", Loamy Cold Desert, Loamy Salt Desert, Saline Lowland,Salt Desert Breaks, Salt Flats, Salt Meadow Sands 7"-9", Sandy 7"-9', Sandy Cold Desert, Sandy Salt Desert, Shale 7"-9", Shale/Sands Complex, Shallow Loamy, Shallow Sandy,Shallow Slopes, Silty Salt Desert, Silty Swale, Steep Slopes
#6	Basin wildrye (Magnar) Western wheatgrass (Rosanna) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Orchardgrass (Paiute) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana	2 3 3 1 1	Foothill Swale, Sandy Swale, Swale Meadow

12. Leave the disturbed area in a condition that provides drainage with no additional maintenance.

13. The permit holder is required to control noxious weeds within the project area in accordance with label requirements and BLM regulations.

14. To minimize adverse impacts on stream banks, temporary use areas (TUA) associated with boring must be situated a safe distance from actively eroding stream terraces (e.g. ~ 40'). In addition, a minimum burial depth of 10-12 feet will be required as the pipeline crosses beneath Big Foundation Creek.

15. To prevent disturbance of the riparian area, the permit holder shall not allow vehicles or equipment from crossing or construction within the riparian area.

16. Holder shall comply with "Gold Book" surface operating standards for constructing the pipeline. Promptly revegetate all disturbed surfaces following construction with Standard seed mix #1 as defined in the White River ROD/ RMP. Flow deflectors and sediment traps (woody debris) must also be utilized in attempts to mitigate erosive potential of overland flows and minimize surface exposure to eolian processes The use of biodegradable fabric (e.g. jute) may be necessary to stabilize certain areas highly susceptible to erosion. Any stockpiled soils must

be covered (if left for more than one work day) and silt fences will be situated on down gradient sides.

17. Paint all above ground facilities Juniper Green.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: Compliance inspections shall be performed by the White River Field Office realty staff.

NAME OF PREPARER: Linda Jones

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 7/27/05

ATTACHMENTS: Location map of the proposed action.

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Location of Proposed Action
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